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Future teachers and social change in Bolivia: between decolonisation and demonstration

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Introduction:
Bolivia, future teachers and social transformation

'*Education as the practice of freedom – as opposed to education as the practice of domination – denies that man is abstract, isolated, independent, and unattached to the world*' (Freire, 1970: 62)

1.1 Research relevance and rationale

The rise of Evo Morales: bringing change amidst continuity?

Dynamite is exploding on the corner of the Prado, the main street in the centre of La Paz in the Bolivian highlands. On a Friday afternoon, a large procession of urban schoolteachers is filling the streets with their presence and slogans. '*¡Contra la descentralización! ¡Contra la educación privada! ¡Contra la corrupción!*'[1] These teachers march the streets regularly on Friday afternoons in their fight against government reform initiatives. It is October 2007, and the first 'indigenous-led' government of Evo Morales is close to ending its second year of reign. Two years earlier, in December 2005, the election of president Evo Morales Ayma attracted the eyes of the world on Bolivia. The majority of Bolivia's population voted for the former coca-farmer, union activist and political leader of the 'Movement Towards Socialism' party (MAS). Not only was Morales elected as president, his MAS party also won a majority in Congress, enabling the formation of a new cabinet that supported him in his ambitious new political agenda for change (Postero, 2007: 2). Morales became famous, nationally and internationally, for different reasons. Besides being potrayed as the 'sweater-wearing president', the 'best friend' of both Castro (Cuba) and Chavez (Venezuela), and as a fierce opponent of America's anti-drugs war in international media, on a national scale Morales promised to put an end to the historical processes of exclusion and marginalisation of Bolivia's indigenous majority.

The government of Evo Morales is dedicated to change Bolivia amidst a context of deep and continuing processes of poverty, inequality and conflict. With a 'politics of change', the new government endeavours to radically restructure Bolivian economy, politics and society, with education as a major vehicle for this change. Through the 'decolonisation' of Bolivian politics, education and society, the government of Morales aims to overcome the ills of colonialism,

[1] 'Against decentralisation! Against private education! Against corruption!'.

racism and the structural stains of poverty and inequality caused by neoliberalism. Education is officially recognised as '*the highest function of the state*' (Proyecto de Ley, 2007), and it finds itself at the forefront of debates in the streets, media and parliament. The new education law that aims to decolonise the entire education system was finally approved in December 2010. During the public launch of this new law, '*that has been created by Bolivians, and not by the World Bank or the IMF*', Bolivia's president Evo Morales claimed that '*teachers are the soldiers of the liberation and decolonisation of Bolivia*' (Ministerio de Educación de Bolivia, 2010d). Being part of a larger Latin American '*region in revolt*' (Dangl 2007:7), change and transformation are on the tips of policy makers' tongues in contemporary Bolivia, not least when it concerns the role of educators for societal transformation. This relationship is clearly stated in an introduction to an early draft of the new law (Proyecto de Ley, 2006):

'*The processes of historical change taking place at present in benefit of the Bolivian people, propelled by the political will of the government and popular social movements, present a historic opportunity to deeply change education policy, making it the engine for sustainable development of the state and establishment of a new society based on solidarity, justice, harmony and complementarity of own cultural identities*' (translation by author).

Bolivia has always been a country of extremes and contrasts; it is '*demographically the most Indian country in the Americas*' (Zoomers, 2006: 1024) and, since its independence in 1825, the country has struggled to establish internal cohesion and a national identity in the face of substantial ethnic and geographic diversity (Kohl and Farthing, 2006: 40). Bolivia's unequal society is being described by some as *'a beggar on a throne of gold*' (Brienen, 2007: 27), contrasting the high levels of poverty with the rich resources hidden in the country's soil. The election and re-election of today's president Evo Morales, identified by many as an indigenous leader, is symbolic of the rise of indigenous social movements in the last few decades.[2] These emerged from a cry for change in Bolivia, as well as other countries in the region, including for instance Ecuador, Nicaragua, Uruguay, Brazil, Paraguay and Venezuela. Bolivia's political shift is thus part of a wider contemporary 'turn to the left' in Latin America (Lazar and McNeish, 2006: 157; Rodriguez-Garavito et al, 2008; Dangl 2010: 4). Inspired by both left wing and indigenous ideals, and in line with wider constitutional reforms throughout contemporary Latin America, a new Bolivian constitution was overwhelmingly approved in a referendum in January 2009. With this new constituion, the Morales government pushes for large scale land reforms, the nationalisation of natural resources and an alternative, endogenous development route based on environmental and social justice, which officially recognises Bolivia's 36 different cultures, each with their own language, together creating the Plurinational State of Bolivia. Map 1 illustrates Bolivia's nine departments, as well as its landlocked location in the heart of South America, in between its neighbouring countries Brazil, Paraguay, Argentina, Chile and Peru.

Eloquently put by Kohl and Bresnahan (2010: 5), the achievements of the Morales government are, so far, much like beauty in the eye of the beholder as Bolivia remains one of the poorest and most unequal countries of the Latin American continent. Huge inequalities, between rich and poor, between lowland and highland Bolivia, and between different ethnic-cultural groups, lead to social tensions and conflicts (Latinobarómetro, 2007; Lopes Cardozo, 2009).

[2] In August 2008 two thirds of the voters during a recall referendum decided to let the government continue, while Morales was re-elected for his second term of presidency in December 2009.

Although this moment is indeed a significant one in Bolivian history, in the eyes of Brienen it is also part of a longer historical process, as '*Morales follows in the footsteps of a long line of revolutionaries and reformers who have attempted to wholly restructure Bolivian society under some unifying banner*' (Brienen, 2007: 22). Brienen's observation echoes the discourse of Morales' inauguration speech, in which he purposefully declared how the '*democratic cultural revolution is part of the struggle of our ancestors; it is the continuity of the fight of Túpac Katari and Che Guevarra*' (Evo Morales in Postero, 2007: 17).

Map 1, Bolivia United Nations Map, 2004

Although democratically elected with a unique first-round majority vote, and a strong support base with social movements, Evo Morales' transformatory political line is not accepted uncontestedly by various groups in Bolivian society. With regard to the education sector, the tense political situation and the long process towards consensus on the new constitution results in a 'sense of waiting' for new policy directives to come, in a time when social tensions are rising. There is a strong divide between (richer) elites in the fertile lowlands who mostly disagree with the redistribution and nationalisation plans, and the pro-Morales supporters that predominantly

inhabit the poorer and higher regions of the country. Not all groups in Bolivian society, and similarly not all teachers, approve of Morales' new project of decolonisation; some see it as a (new) imposition in to their lives, others as clashing with their interests or political views. Regardless of Bolivia's radical political sway, the Friday-afternoon demonstrating teachers of La Paz are determined to continue their struggle to stop the Morales government from radically transforming the education system – just as they have demonstrated against former government reform plans. In contrast, other groups of mostly rural and Morales-supporting teachers, and particularly their union-representatives, feel a sincere sense of ownership of the decolonisation project. It is important to reach an understanding of the role, potentials and difficulties of the envisaged transformation of Bolivia's teacher education sector, as a crucial vehicle for Morales' broader politics of change. In the context of this clear political will and transformatory discourse, how and why is it so difficult to accomplish revolutionary transformation of Bolivian society *and* its education system in practice?

Bolivia's unique response to development and social change

With its new political push for radical, structural, societal and educational transformation, Bolivia is marking an exceptional alternative route towards development that stands in stark contrast to mainstream (neoliberal inspired) global tendencies and generates an intriguing area for social science research. Morales, together with his colleagues Chavez in Venezuela and Correa in Ecuador, follow a model of '21st century socialism', as an alternative to market capitalism. 21st Century socialism provides an alternative development model, which does not fully reject capitalism (yet it does reject *foreign* imposed market policies), as it seeks to embed capitalism within a humanitarian project for social justice (Kennemore and Weeks, 2011).[3] In this line of thought, Bolivian vice President García Linera stated how '*we will never be like other places*'. He continued his speech, at the inauguration of the Constitutional Assembly in August 2006, with the following words: *'for 513 years we have tried a failed path. We have the right to try another way, to gain control*' (La Razon, 07-08-2006). Bolivia's National Development Plan (*Plan Nacional de Desarollo* - PND, 2006-2010) is consequently aimed at a '*sovereign, dignified, productive and democratic Bolivia where everyone can live well*'. Living well, or *vivir bien*, is an important concept also adopted in other leftist oriented Latin American countries, albeit in slighly different ways. In Venezuela, for example, '*buen vivir*' is aimed at 'supreme happiness' and forms an integral part of the 21st century socialism political project '*for national liberation, endogenous development, and for an alternative environmentally friendly and sustainable conception of society and development*' (see for instance Griffiths, forthcoming: 1). In Bolivia, 'to live well' is defined in the PND as '*access to and enjoyment of resources and material assets; affective, subjective and spiritual realisation; in harmony with nature and the wider community*' (Ministerio de Planificacion del Desarollo, 2006-2010). This '*alternative cosmovision*' presumes to: '*live in harmony with nature, to live a social life in solidarity, with a democratic and integral plurinational and diverse development, a multidimensional change departing from cultural diversity and with interculturality and diversity at the basis of the quality of life*' (National Development Plan in Yapu, 2009: 51-52).[4]

[3] The model of 21st century socialism emerged for the first time in the 1990s, as a response to the failures and damages caused by market-oriented policies throughout the Latin American region. It critiques the mistakes of both neoliberalism and twentieth century socialism (the latter one being dictatorial, and economic failure and no longer relevant) (Kennemore and Weeks, 2011).

[4] *Cosmovisión* translates as *Weltanschauung* or comprehensive world view.

Bolivia's engagement with these principles received international attention during the Climate Conference in Copenhagen in January 2010, when Morales defended the idea of respecting Mother Earth (or *La Pachamama*) and *'vivir bien'* – or to live well *enough*, and not to live well at the expense of other people and nature (see for instance Democracy Now, 2010).[5] In this sense, Bolivia's interpretation of 'social justice' – as a way to *vivir bien* (live well) – is a broad conceptualisation that includes environmental justice, social equality and respect for diversity, political/democratic representation for all and an equal economic system to the benefit of all Bolivians – and particularly not serving the economic interests of foreign actors. Or in the words of president Evo Morales on education's function to reach this situation of social justice or 'living well for all': '*patriotism should be encouraged in classrooms so that students [learn to] defend our national interests, and [to stay] far removed from demands which were to serve foreign interests. Education should foster solidarity, as it is more important to share than to compete*' (Ministerio de Educación de Bolivia, 2010d). With this statement, the government openly and strongly chooses to break from a Bolivian history of exclusionary and neoliberal inspired politics. The phenomenon of globalisation paints the broader picture in which societal and educational changes take place in Bolivia and elsewhere. Refraining from seeing globalisation as an '*unambiguous and non-negotiable structural constraint*' (Hay, 2002a: 164-166), this thesis positions the case of Bolivia in a wider context of counter-hegemonic tendencies to processes of globalisation.The research follows a multiscalar, interdisciplinary and historically informed approach that aims to reveal Bolivia's 'politics of teacher education' (Dale, 2000; Dale, 2005), by posing questions that do not solely examine Bolivian education but reach beyond the education sector and the national state level.

The role of education in Bolivia's social transformation

Teaching is a political act which can promote or hinder the realisation of a more just and humane society (Freire, 1970; Price, 2001). Social transformation in Bolivia is – at least discursively – high on the political agenda, as explained above. In Bolivia, education is perceived to play an important role in processes of change. In the same week that I witnessed the Friday afternoon teachers' demonstration, a Bolivian Ministry of Education (MoE) official explained to me during an interview how: '*society will not change if we do not change education, and education will not truly change when we do not change teacher education*'.[6] This comment provides a strong argument for the focus of this research: if we want to understand processes of social transformation in Bolivia, education provides an important entry point, and teacher education lies at the basis of any education system. In relation to processes of social transformation, education *can* provide a tool for emancipation, empowerment, tolerance, cohesion, strengthening of cultural identities and (indigenous) knowledge, integration into the national (and international) economy, reinforcement of national unity and a critical cultural, societal and political awareness. Education policies not only represent the state's vision on how its population can be best 'developed', it also defines what type of citizen is envisaged, or how Bolivia aims to deal with its diverse population and social inequalities. Practices in education institutes at different levels also provide valuable

[5] *La Pachamama* is widely recognised in Bolivia as a highly spiritualized and honored Mother Earth, which has a reciprocal relationship with humans. Kennemore and Weeksn (2011: 273) point out how recently the Bolivian government has a weakened reputation in the debates on climate change, as it continues to fund its own social policies through the extraction of natural resources.

[6] All quotes from respondents are interpreted and translated from Spanish to English by the author.

information on how these policies work in reality.[7] In order to understand the implications of education reforms, as part of wider state policies, we need to understand educators' roles and agency in developing strategies that either work to enhance or resist these processes.

Education policies in Bolivia historically have dealt with the issues of diversity and inequality in different ways, slowly shifting from a homogenising and modernising type of schooling to a more inclusionary system. Although the 1994 Educational Reforms for intercultural and bilingual education was seen as an innovative reform at the time, its design and implementation process was soon criticised by a range of Bolivia's education actors for a lack of genuine participation, and for being 'imposed' by foreign actors. As one of its first political acts, the Morales government immediately decided to replace the 1994 Reform and create a new Bolivian-owned and 'revolutionary' education law (which the thesis accordingly refers to as the ASEP law) to decolonise the education system, which carries the names of two historical indigenous educators: *Avelino Siñani* and *Elizardo Pérez*. On the one hand, Bolivia's new education reform, which forms a strategic part of Morales' government's 'politics of change', aligns with the global discourse of quality *Education For All*. It differs, however, in promoting a decolonised, inter- and intracultural, productive and communitarian education system, an approach that is unprecedented.[8] Building from debates in Latin America and beyond of education for liberation (including the well known work of Freire, 1970), Bolivia's new education law stipulates a '*liberatory pedagogy*', as it encourages personal development and a critical awareness of reality '*in order to change it*' (Article 3.14, ASEP law, 2010b).

Teacher education institutes are crucial spaces to bring about educational changes and should ideally work as a jump start for societal change, since this is where a new generation of future teachers are prepared. Several Bolivian based authors verify the importance and necessity to study, politically prioritise and radically transform (pre-service and in-service) teacher education (Speiser 2000; Talavera Simoni 2002; Nucinkis 2004; Albó 2005; Van Dam 2006). Generally, there is quite a negative image and low status of teacher education institutes in Latin America (Vaillant 2010). Concerns include a low quality of the training; low academic achievements of students that enrol in Normales; little '*actualizacion*' (in-service training); a disconnection between theorecical and practical training; a lack of sufficient infrastructure (buildings, libraries, computers); and a lack of cooperation and coordination of teacher training (at the national level) (see for instance Rama, 2004). Often teachers and their trainers are seen as part of the problem of this low quality education, rather than as part of the solution. Hence, many recent (neo-liberal) reforms demanded individual solutions by shortening the training and demanding more from teachers, instead of adequately addressing structural obstacles to educational qualities at the same time (Feldfeber, 2007; Tatto, 2007; Sleeter, 1996). Torres del Castillo argues for the need for a 'new model of teacher training' in the Latin American region. It is no longer possible to ask teachers to be well informed, creative, innovative, participatory, bilingual, interculturally sensitive, understanding, critical, and an agent for change, when their

[7] With most academic attention paid to the role of non-formal 'popular education' in Latin American processes of social change (Bartlett 2005), this thesis sets out to understand the potential for social change in the formal education field in Bolivia, in which the majority of students are enrolled.

[8] With 'communitarian education', I do not refer to a political philosophy of 'communitarianism', but rather to the Bolivian contemporary notion of 'community-based' education. I use the word 'communitarian' so as to stay close to the Bolivian discourse.

education in the teacher education institutes fails to adequately prepare them (Torres del Castillo, 2007: 10-12). However, it has to be noted that changing educational institutions, processes and actions is a difficult and slow process. Teachers, teacher trainers and training institutions – in Bolivia referred to as *Normales* – are not always welcome to radical changes. It takes a lot of time and investment, and lays a great burden on often already overburdened educators of all levels (Talavera Simoni, 2002: 305).

Bolivia substantiates its unique contemporary approach to the teacher education sector in a number of ways. Contrary to global mainstream teacher education reforms, in Bolivia the training of future teachers has been prioritised and extended (from three and a half to five years), instead of shortened, while teachers' salaries have increased significantly over the past few years.[9] In response to the fact that teachers – and particularly their training – have not been at the centre of the reforms taking place in Latin America (Speiser, 20009: 28), and based on the failure of the implementation of the Bolivian 1994 reform, the new ASEP law emphasises the need to start the reform at teacher training institute level – the Normales. In spite of this recent acknowledgement of the importance of teacher education in Bolivia, there is still a lack of academic, institutional, financial and statistical information in this area. In one of the few in-depth studies on teacher education in Bolivia, Lozada Pereira concludes that '*it is time for an investigation into the quality of teacher education not only by using standardised indicators, but also through an integral social science analysis of the complexities*' (2004: 161). This is exactly what this thesis aims to do. In addition to the need to explore the institutional mechanisms of teacher education, another pressing research area in the field of teacher education is to understand teachers' identities and motivations, particularly in diverse societies (Hamilton and Clandinin, 2011). In sum, the rationale of this thesis is to explain both these structural-institutional aspects of the governance of teacher education, as well as the agential features of Bolivia's teacher education system, in the context of the revolutionary transformation of Bolivian society that is currently taking place. The story of Ramiro in Box 1 effectively illustrates the relevance of this research motivation.

[9] Considering the very low level of teachers'salaries in Bolivia for a long time, the salaries still remain too low according to Bolivia's teacher unions (see also Talavera 2011). However, compared to other sectors, teachers' salaries are relatively high.

Box 1: Ramiro

The following story of Ramiro's life as an '*Aymara Bolivian, almost-teacher and taxi chauffeur*' as he refers to himself, perfectly illustrates the choices, strategies and tensions that Bolivia's future teachers face on a daily basis. Ramiro, 28, was born into a family with three brothers in the highland city of El Alto, the highly politicised support base of Evo Morales. His father was more dedicated to the bottle than to his young family and left when Ramiro was too young to remember him. His mother works in the food section of El Alto's gigantic market, where she sells various types of potatoes, quinoa and other goods. Every morning, Ramiro gets up at 5am to drive his mother to the local food distribution centre, where they load their daily merchandise in the back of the taxi. After Ramiro has dropped off his mother and her goods at the market, he usually manages to finish several taxi-rides before he drives down to the teacher training institute Simón Bolívar in the city of La Paz, where classes start at 7.30am.

Becoming a teacher was a logical, rational and vocational choice, Ramiro told. During a long interview at the kitchen table, he started to explain how '*my family wanted me to become something in life, and so I chose to become a teacher, because when you graduate you have a secure job and a secure salary, and I can support them'*. Moreover, he continued, '*I also wanted to become a teacher because I have good skills to teach, to laugh and communicate with young people. For two years, I worked on Isla del Sol [the Sun Island – in the Titicaca Lake] as an English and Aymara teacher, and there I became interested to enter the Normal*'. The final reason, he assured me, had grown during his training over the past years. *'In the Normal they teach you the theories, and it's very traditional. We just have to copy, and we get bored and tired. But this is not how we should teach our students later on. When I become a teacher, I want to give incentives to my students; I want them to enjoy school. I will talk about our Andean culture, we will play theatre in Aymara language, and I will let them make expositions of their own study projects*'. In addition to Ramiro's desire to improve the quality of education in his future classroom, he is also committed to the envisaged transformation of Bolivian society. *'I very much wish that my country Bolivia progresses. I voted for Evo, because he is an alternative for me. I keep having faith in my president, who is an indigenous, and he has suffered the same as we have. He comes from a very low class background, so he knows the suffering, and that is what he is fighting for. But, this change will need years; it is not an overnight change*'. However, together with many other (almost) teachers in Bolivia, Ramiro's political support to Evo and the MAS does not mean he agrees with all measures taken by the Ministry of Education, as is exemplified by the many demonstrations of both Ramiro's urban and rural colleagues. While Ramiro's older brother works as a full-time taxi driver, and his younger brother has recently joined the army, Ramiro is persistent about his future as a teacher.

It had, however, not been easy for Ramiro to get into the Normal. Like thousands of others, it took him three consecutive years before he finally passed the entrance exam and interview, and was lucky enough to be granted admission to the Normal Simón Bolívar, Bolivia's largest teacher training institute in the city of La Paz. When I first met Ramiro about four years ago, he was studying to become an English teacher, yet he suffered discrimination on the basis of his low language proficiency. This was partly due to the fact that he could not keep up with the level of English of other students, as he lacked the finances to pay for extra classes, which most other students did. He re-examined his destiny, and three years later he decided to switch his specialisation to become an Aymara teacher. *'Now, I am proud to become an Aymara teacher, because I identify with being indigenous, because I talk Aymara, because this is who I am*'. Ramiro's choice and feelings exemplify the current changes in Bolivian political discourse and education policy, in which indigenous cultures and languages are revalued. His story illustrates some of the various features around the future teachers' potential role, both as improvers of educational quality, as well as their latent political agency in processes of transformation in a highly inequal, diverse and conflictive Bolivian society.

1.2 Positioning this research within relevant debates in the literature

Teachers, like Ramiro, are either consciously or unknowingly strategic political actors, as they spend numerous hours with their students, and contribute to the way Bolivia's future generations will perceive their peers, neighbours, fellow citizens and foreign visitors. Also, becoming a teacher, and entering formal teacher education in one of the 'Normales', is perceived by many lower class and indigenous Bolivians as one of the few escape routes from poverty. This is clearly illustrated by groups of youngsters who see themselves as forced into going on hunger strike in protest at being refused entrance into a teacher training career. Bolivian teachers are often seen as important figures within communities (Canessa, 2004: 190) and as crucial actors in the implementation of nationwide education reforms (Van Dam, 2007: 5; Contreras and Talavera, 2003: 25). Hence, educators play a crucial role in constructing or deconstructing social imaginaries, such as the 'decolonised nation' the current Bolivian government envisages. In several places around the globe teachers have proven to be a potential '*new intelligentsia*' that can actively engage in transforming or reforming society, either in support of – or against – a hegemonic regime. From Sindhi nationalist teacher activists in Pakistan, to African-American civil-rights activist students in the United States, and Shining Paths' revolutionary basis at the University of Ayacucho in Peru; educators-with-a-mission can be found all over the world (Baud and Rutten, 2004: 213-214). In the words of Freire, the struggle to construct a more just society requires teachers who realise that their role is not a neutral one (Delany-Barmann, 2010: 193).

The knowledge(s) and skills required from teachers in the state's new vision of decolonising and inter-/intracultural education demand Bolivian teachers to become public intellectuals – an expectation that is seemingly in contrast to the low status and acknowledgement Bolivian teachers are still faced with in their daily lives. For a long time Bolivian teachers have been structurally undervalued, underpayed and underestimated with regard to their societal importance, and potential strategic importance in processes of development. Even though current policies have shifted their attention to the need to include (future) teachers in their strategies for social change, this discourse is not reflected in educational and societal reality in Bolivia, where teachers still struggle to cope with multiple jobs, conflicts-of-interest with parents and incertainty on what is expected from them with yet another reform. This situation has many resemblances to the situation in other parts of the world. Although teachers are commemorated annually on the 5th October on World Teachers' day[10], we still see a lack of recognition worldwide for the importance of the teaching profession. Many teachers – obviously in some cases more severe than in others – are given a low social and professional status, with low or even absent rewards and battle with a lack of quality training and support. Considering these global developments, we can speak of a '*crisis in the teaching profession*', where a market model of education is pushing for an instrumentalist perspective on teachers as 'products', leading to stronger control mechanisms and a '*new teacher accountability*', diminishing teacher morale (Vongalis-Macrow, 2007: 430-432).

[10] World teachers' day commemorates the UNESCO/ILO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers of 1966.

A global crisis in the teaching profession

In line with a global tendency of a crisis within the teaching profession, the teaching profession in Bolivia neither has high social recognition nor adequate economic compensation (Lozada Pereira, 2004: 181). These factors are compounded by the presence of a problematic pre-service and in-service teacher education system. Due to processes of globalisation, since the 1990s a so-called 'global teacher reform agenda' is setting standards for a market oriented model of education in many places around the globe. Policies that 'deal with teachers' are borrowed and copied from one place to the other, sometimes without the necessary adaptations to another context (Apple, 2009: xi). Teachers are inserted into new systems of control, accreditation and certification, where incentives and rewards are linked to performance, all aimed to compete in a global market (Tatto, 2007: 8). Robertson (2011: 3-4) analyses how over the past decade, market-driven policy making by the World Bank and the International Finance Corporation has influenced teachers' work on a global scale, with evidence suggesting that these policies not only create '*a worse set of conditions for teachers in schools*', but that they are also '*likely to generate negative outcomes and diminished opportunities for learning*'. These organisations push for a market-oriented restructuring of education systems through mechanisms such as public-private-partnerships, often followed by reduced teachers' salaries (and training), which feeds into the World Bank's interest of a reduction of GDP (Gross Domestic Product) spend on teachers' wages and greater control over teachers' capability, by linking teacher performance to student outcomes (Roberston 2011: 4). Bolivia's recent policy shift endeavours to counter these global tendencies towards a commodification of the education profession.

When schools, within a neo-liberal human capital perspective, become mere factories with the aim to transmit certain skills (mathematics, reading and writing) in order to form productive citizens, teachers become 'interchangeable parts' in the production process, working with standardised formats (curricula, teaching to the test). Learning, then, becomes an instrumental means to an end (grades, certificates, job opportunities). Whereas most of these 'performance-based' and 'teacher-accountability' measures argue to pursue an improvement of the quality of education, we should question if limiting teachers' authority and autonomy to a one-size-fits-all market model will do this job. Following a market driven global education model, in many places teacher morale and quality is not enhanced but further unravelled by the shortening of teacher training courses or cutting teacher salaries – a situation that until recently was also reflected in Bolivia.

Bolivia's current ASEP law is an attempt to counter the global tendency of a standardised, market-oriented reform process, as its discourse proclaims to foster various forms of knowledges and a historical and contemporary socio-political awareness, through education a public education system. Yet, the data of this study reveals inadequate engagement of, and support for, teachers' meaningful participation in policy-making and implementation processes, limiting their spirit and possibilities to encourage critical and political(-ly aware) education. The thesis explores both the positions of resistance as well as support to the new decolonising reform process of the various actors involved in the (teacher) education arena, including teachers' unions and social movements. However, the potential impact of teachers' conscious or unintended strategies on processes of educational and social transformation is not to be overestimated either. It is important to bear in mind how on a global scale educators at all levels of the system – and not

excluding those in Bolivia – suffer low status, low salaries and little to no support or training, even when they are supposed to be bringing about new education reforms or even societal transformation.

Teachers thus face a contradictory role, on the one hand being a 'professional' that is assigned with socialising future generations and expected to restrain from striking let alone collectively organising trade unions. On the other hand, as civil servant, teachers are faced with low wages and low status, forcing them to act collectively to defend their interests. Hence, teachers unions' work is very politicised, since they have to both defend their collective members interests, as well as some notion of 'public education' as an interest of the general public – which often clashes with state led (neoliberal) reforms (Novelli, 2009). Harvie's (2006) elaboration of teachers' struggle 'within, against and beyond capital' is useful here. Harvie explains how 'the classroom is a site of struggle' in which teachers produce new labour power for a capitalist mode of production in the school-as-factory (*within capital*), yet at the same time struggle against and even beyond capital, in collective (unionised) and individual ways. Harvie describes how in Africa '*students and teachers have engaged in countless struggles – student strikes, teacher strikes, exam boycotts, demonstrations, road blocks, occupations of schools and university buildings*' (2006: 22).

Likewise, such events of demonstrating teachers take place in Bolivia and other Latin American countries. In one of the few studies that critically analyses this topic, Kosar Altinyelken (2010) warns against simplifying teachers' resistance as something negative and argues how, in the case of Turkey, teachers' strategies to modify and resist the new curriculum is actually driven by a positive rationale. Instead of simply viewing teachers as conservative and problematic, she makes a case for perceiving teachers as inventive and knowledgeable decision-makers with well established beliefs, or 'good sense', about their roles and the needs of their students (Kosar Altinyelken, 2010: 196-198). She aligns with a growing body of literature that calls for a more nuanced view on the tensions between teachers' 'good sense', their 'principled resistance', their professional autonomy and growing organisational controls. Rather than putting aside teachers' resistance as a psychological deficit or basic reluctance, teachers' *can* also respond from their professional principles (Achinstein and Ogawa, 2006). In the case of Bolivia, as Talavera's (2011) work shows, teacher resistance from the urban union since the military dictatorships and the subsequent neoliberal period are not rooted in professional principles for improving educational quality anymore, but rather in improving working conditions and salary issues. In conclusion, we should avoid simplistic black-and-white accounts of teachers' resistance being either positive or emancipatory versus negative and un-principled.

Teaching for socio-educational change – a critical pedagogy of social justice

What, then, is the (potential) role of educators in Bolivia's national context where – at least rhetorically – the state supports a 'radical pedagogy'? Why do teachers still resist, even when policies seem to be more inclusive and just (at least in ideology)? Can we conclude that teachers are not necessarily a progressive force, but in some cases even more so a conservative one? The complexity of teachers' work is reflected in that it responds to both social and educational change. There is a present policy priority towards their educational role in the 'knowledge economy', downplaying teachers' social relevancy (Torres del Castillo, 2007). However, in the case of Turkey, Kosar Altinyelken shows how teachers' political affiliations, concerns for the

future of the regime, and more general criticism of the government, all influenced teachers' attitudes towards the new curriculum and their classroom practices (2010: 244). She suggests the need to study the political issues surrounding reform implementation, which is similarly important in contexts such as Bolivia. This research wants to stress the importance of both educational and societal roles of teachers, albeit very complex, especially in the unstable context of Bolivia. This idea is also brought forward by those authors in favour of (developing) social justice teacher education, which aims to combine both the 'professional' (knowledge and learning) tasks and the social justice tasks of teachers (Cochran-Smith et al, 2009). Grant (2009) reminds us of the story told by the American black social movement leader Baldwin in 1963 in New York, in front of an audience of around two hundred teachers. This speech became known as '*A Talk to the Teachers*' and it openly challenges teachers at a personal level to become '*workers for social justice*', by stating '*it is your responsibility to change society if you think of yourself as an educated person...*'. Baldwin was one of the founders of the idea that teachers *could* function as a critical mass in the struggle for social justice (Grant, 2009: 654-655).

In many places around the globe teachers are often attacked in the media, blamed and shamed as being the main cause of low quality education, instead of seeing teachers as part of a potential solution. In my view this is contra-productive in the endeavour for better quality and social justice oriented education. Teachers have an enormous, important and difficult task to fulfil, and they should be given the opportunity and incentive to develop themselves and to receive the status and compensation that they deserve (Lopes Cardozo, 2009). Both critical pedagogues Apple and Giroux thus warn for the devaluation and deskilling of the teaching profession, through increased productivity levels and control (Apple, 1982: 24; Giroux, 2003b: 47; Apple, 2009: ix-xii). According to Giroux, '*the deskilling that teachers experience across the world is further exacerbated by World Bank pedagogies that impose on countries forms of privatization and standardised curricula that undermine the potential for critical inquiry and engaged citizenship. Learning in this instance is depoliticized and often reduced to teaching to the test'* (2003b: 47-49).

Education for social change ideally contributes to both academic competencies and the democratisation of both institutions and relations within – and beyond – the walls of the school; students and teachers should not just study social injustices, but actively transform them (North, 2008). Educators, collectively organised amongst themselves, yet also together with other social activists, can employ a radical pedagogy of social justice as a constructive form of resistance, political intervention and to create opportunities for social transformation: '*learning is not about processing received knowledge but about actually transforming it as part of a more expansive struggle for individual rights and social justice*' (Giroux, 2003a: 11). Committed to the idea of social justice education, North writes about 'performative pedagogy', which challenges the distinction in learning practices between knowledge and action. In this view, education as a transformative tool is not about 'learning about', but 'learning from', or actively challenging deep internal beliefs and world views (North, 2006; North, 2006; North, 2008).

The insights from critical pedagogy literature are relevant when researching education and social transformation in the case of Bolivia, and have influenced the design and analysis of this study, as critical pedagogy sees education as an instrument to battle structural forms of marginalisation through the empowerment of agents of social change. During the past three decades, critical education theorists (to name a few: Apple, 1982; 2009; Banks, 2004; hooks, 1994;

Giroux, 2003b; Sleeter, 1996) have argued for a critical approach that can be loosely identified as 'critical pedagogy', although various other terms (radical pedagogy, democratic education) are also in use (Edwards Jr., 2010). Critical or radical pedagogy is an educational movement that has been largely inspired by Marxist theory, Gramsci's work on cultural hegemony and Freire's work on education for liberation. A critical pedagogy perspective is needed in order to tackle the fallacies of neoliberal inspired and market-driven education policies, and their exclusionary effects on marginalised groups. Giroux, for example, recalls how education is part of politics, power and authority, urging social scientists to analyse and explain how dominant discourses and social relations affect (non-)school going children and youth in societies characterised by deep structures of discrimination. What is particularly interesting of Giroux's work for this study, is his demand to '*make the pedagogical more political by identifying the link between learning and social transformation, provide the conditions for students to learn a range of critical capacities in order to expand the possibilities of human agency, and recover the role of the teacher as an oppositional intellectual*' (Giroux, 2003a: 7). This thesis builds from these theoretical insights, and places them in the contemporary context of Bolivian political tendencies against (globalised) neoliberalism and in favour of – at least ideologically – collective and individual rights and social justice.

The following quote from the Bolivian ASEP law (2007) shows the significance and relevance of the relation between education and social justice in the Bolivian context: *'Education is in and for life, with dignity and social justice assuming work like a vital necessity and an integrative and balancing relationship with the cosmos and nature, to live well (vivir bien).'* The new constitution further stipulates that teachers are expected to engage in community life by undertaking (action) research to '*solve productive and social problems*' in the community, to '*promote scientific, cultural and linguistic diversity*', and to *'participate side by side with the local population in all processes of social liberation, in order to create a society with more equity and social justice*' (Article 91 of the new constitution, 2008: 20). Recognising that social justice is a broad and multi-interpretable concept, this study explores the Bolivian interpretation of what a socially just education system – and society – looks like. The aforementioned Latin American coloniality debates are helpful theoretical tools to understand this Bolivian conceptualisation of social justice. Based on document analysis and interview data, for this study I identify the Bolivian conceptualisation of social justice in education as 'the process of transformation through decolonisation of the education system in order for all Bolivians to '*vivir bien*' (live well)'. As mentioned in the introduction of the book, *vivir bien* is a central concept in the National Development Plan, the constitution and the ASEP reform.

Similar to the link between justice and education in current Bolivian policies, at a global level over the past decade the term social justice is appearing more and more throughout the field of education – in literature and programme design of teacher education programmes, in educational conferences and in scholarly articles and books (North, 2006: 507). Social justice has become education's latest 'catchphrase' (North, 2008), not least in the field of teacher education (Zeichner, 2009). Zeichner, a key author in the subfield of 'Teacher Education for Social Justice', outlines the three main categories of theories about the concept of social justice: firstly, a liberal approach to social justice focused on the distribution of material goods and services, mainly based on the work of Rawls (North, 2006; Rawls in Zeichner, 2009: xvi; North, 2006: 511); secondly, recognition theories which emphasise the importance of social relations among individuals and groups within the institutions (based on the work of e.g. Young 1990, in

Zeichner, 2009: xvi); and finally, theories that combine both distributive and relational justice, such as Frasers' approach, which I find useful when analysing the present socio-political and educational development in Bolivia (further elaborated in the next chapter). In a case study on pre-service teacher training for elementary science teachers in New York, Moore's findings suggest that '*teacher education must play a more immediate, fundamental and emancipatory role in preparing pre-service teachers in developing science teachers identities and a stance toward social justice*' (Moore, 2008: 589). Moore, drawing from Lewis, Banks, Cochran-Smith and others, argues how in the pre-service preparation of teacher students, social justice involves exploring the social construction of unequal hierarchies, privileges and access to power, and consequently to deconstruct unjust and oppressive structures for marginalised groups of students (Moore, 2008: 591-592). Studying the case of Bolivia, then, becomes particularly relevant considering the present anti-neoliberal government and the new education reform, and the possible effects on a cultivation of social justice (teacher) education.

While positioning this research in the broader field of social theory, and particularly within international education debates, I find it useful to draw on the broader critique on educational research developed by Roger Dale (see also Novelli and Lopes Cardozo, 2008). According to Dale, most educational research falls under the notion of 'educational politics' – a somewhat narrower view on educational policies directed to improve the status quo. Rather than understanding education policies as 'applied education policy', this thesis endeavours to produce a 'political sociology of education' (Dale, 1994). It aims to follow the 'politics of education' approach – which sees education systems within a wider multilevel context, and poses questions that reach beyond the education sector and the national state level (Dale, 2000; Dale, 2005).

Drawing from this approach, some key arguments from the broader critique of mainstream educational research developed by Dale (2000; 2005) help to define four 'considerations' for carrying out research from a critical theory perspective. Firstly, research should avoid *disciplinary parochialism*, by conducting interdisciplinary research and combining insights from different sciences (e.g. for this thesis this includes literature from the fields of international development, international relations, educational sciences, critical pedagogy, conflict studies, etc).[11] Secondly, and in recognition of the globalised world we live in, a 'politics of education research approach' should focus beyond the state as a main actor, incorporating a multilevel perspective to avoid *methodological nationalism*. For instance, a narrow focus on the state as the main actor ignores other important players at the grassroots and international levels, above and below the state. Thirdly, research should overcome a persistent *ethnocentrism* within the literature as well as in development approaches, which continue to see the 'Western' state as a model, and the 'Western' way to development as the only one. In this study, I draw from the insights of Latin American coloniality debates (discussed in the following chapter), in acknowledging the existence and equal status of 'other knowledges'. Drawing from Sousa Santos' notion of the 'sociology of rebellion' and the need to 'start listening to the South', it can be argued how, in order to challenge the dominant role of western academia in producing 'valid' knowledge, we need to seek out alternative knowledges as a key task of strengthening critical

[11] Fairclough in his Critical Discourse Approach argues for 'transdisciplinary research', which entails a long term collaboration and dialogue between disciplines (Fairclough 2005: 923).

theory (Novelli, 2006). Moreover, in accepting that, research (design and results) will naturally be influenced by the geography, class, gender, and ethnicity of both researchers and research subjects, efforts should be made to value and support research undertaken by academics, grassroots movements, unions and so on from the Global South[12]. Particularly in educational research, alternative and indigenous non-Western schooling systems have been largely ignored since they were seen as 'falling outside of the parameters of "legitimate" study in the history of the philosophy of education' (Reagan, 2005: 6). Fourthly, we need to challenge a tendency to *a-historicism* in research.[13] This thesis aims to address these four considerations for carrying out social science research, by looking through a critical theoretical and political lense at radical processes of social transformation as exemplified in Bolivia's teacher education sector and beyond.

1.3 Research proposition and research questions

Even though this case study on the role of Bolivian teacher education and educators in processes of social change has a particular spacio-temporal specifity, it does carry a more general relevance as it aims to contribute to wider debates about the socio-political role of teacher education institutes, and its key education actors, in furthering or resisting processes of social change. Inspired by the thinking of Sousa Santos (interview by Dale and Robertson, 2004) on a contextualised and bottom-up ecology of knowledges, in contrast to a hegemonic monoculture of knowledges, this thesis endeavours to tell the story of Bolivian experiences of societal transformations through the lens of teacher education institutions and actors. Or in the words of Sousa Santos: '*we need alternative knowledges for alternative societies and sociabilities*' (interview by Dale and Robertson, 2004: 158). Bolivia's attempts to decolonise the education system therefore deserve closer attention from the global academic field.

With the aim to place this particular case study within its connections to other cases (particularly in the Latin American context), the more general goal of this thesis is to understand the role of teacher education institutes and actors in underpinning or opposing emancipatory education and processes of societal transformation. It takes the new 'revolutionary' government of Evo Morales as its case study. By doing so, the thesis intends to explore how and to what extent Bolivian pre-service teacher education institutes and actors – including teacher students and trainers – develop (un)intended strategies for or against the societal transformation that is envisaged by the new Bolivian Plurinational constitutional regime. Hence, the main research question of this thesis is:

[12] For this thesis, I refer to the Global South as a metaphor for a social, economic and geopolitical space where 'racialiced and subaltern peoples' are struggling to 'establish institutional structures that create a space for alternative theoretical projects that transgress europeanity' (Maldonade-Torres in North 2006: 529) and, regardless of geographical location, a site inhabited by those suffering from (and resisting to) global capitalism (Santos in Mathers and Novelli 2007: 234; Novelli 2006: 280).

[13] In practice, a critical and comparative historiography should be at the basis of any education system aiming to foster its positive face (Bush and Saltarelli 2000).

Main Research Question:

How do Bolivian pre-service teacher education institutes and actors develop strategies for or against the socio-educational transformation that is envisaged by the new Plurinational constitutional regime?

In order to answer this question, the book has been structured into five parts, and directed by the following guiding questions (Table 1):

	Guiding questions and book parts
Part I	*What are the main theoretical and methodological foundations of the research?*
Part II	*How can we understand the historical and present processes of continuity and change in Bolivia's socio-political, economic and educational context?*
Part III	*What are the main structural factors – historical and present governance mechanisms, main actors and power dynamics at different scales – that affect Bolivian teacher education?*
Part IV	*How can we understand the agential factors – teacher students' and teacher trainers' identities, motivations and perceived roles – in the context of an urban and a rural Normal?*
Part V	*What are (future) teachers (un)intentional 'strategies for/against change' and how do these relate to the strategically selective context?*

Table 1, guiding questions and book parts

1.4 Definitions of main concepts

A number of important concepts arise from these questions and deserve further attention. I provide a relevant definition for each concept in relation to the Bolivian context in Box 2. The following theoretical chapter further illustrates these main concepts and their relations in a conceptual scheme. At the start of Parts III, IV and V of the book, I provide an overview and discussion of the relevant debates in the literature that it is necessary to be familiar with in order to understand the data analysis in those book parts.

Box 2. The main concepts and operational definitions

Bolivian pre-service teacher education → the formal system of training for Bolivia's future teachers in preparation of their teaching career. The study focuses on one urban and one rural Bolivian teacher education institute (*Normal*), located respectively in La Paz and Paracaya (see Map locations in chapter 1). Teacher education has a duration of 3.5 years (recently changed to 5 years) and is defined as the responsibility of Bolivia's plurinational state (Asamblea Constituyente de Bolivia, 2008: article 96).

The new Plurinational constitutional regime → the democratically elected (December 2005) and re-elected (December 2009) government led by the first indigenous president Evo Morales, and a new Plurinational constitution as of February 2009, which proposes an Education Reform entitled *Avelino Siñani-Elizardo Pérez* (ASEP), which aims for decolonized, inter- and intra-cultural, communitarian and productive education and pursues social justice and a dignified way of living ('*vivir bien*').

Social Transformation → according to the new Bolivian constitution this forms part of the essential task of the state, as it should '*constitute a just and harmonious society, founded on decolonisation without discrimination or exploitation, with full social justice to consolidate plurinational identities*' (2008: article 9). In the Constitution, education is defined as '*liberating, revolutionary, critical and fostering solidarity*' (article 78), promoting '*gender equity, non-violence and human rights*' (article 79), and advancing the '*integral development of critical social consciousness in and for life, to live well*' ('*vivir bien*', article 80).
Social transformation and social justice are directly linked to the goals of higher education, which includes teacher education, as being: '*intracultural, intercultural and plurilingual, and has as its mission the integral training of highly qualified and professionally competent humans; to develop processes of scientific research to solve problems related to productivity and the social environment; promoting policies and social interaction to strengthen scientific, cultural and linguistic diversity; to participate with the community in all processes of social liberation to build a society with greater equity and social justice*' (2008: article 91).

Book part III: chapters 5 and 6
Structural factors → Teacher education institutes → historical and present governance mechanisms (with a focus on the past two decades), main actors and power dynamics at the different institutional, community, national, regional and global scales that enhance or resist transformation of Bolivian pre-service teacher education as envisaged in the ASEP reform.

Book part IV: chapters 7 and 8
Agential factors → Teacher students and trainers → includes the complex and hybrid identities of Bolivian future teachers and their trainers, the various perceptions of an ideal teacher by different actors, future teachers' motivations and perceived motivations (by other actors) and alleged roles of teachers in urban and rural contexts.

Book part V: chapters 9 and 10
Strategies for/against change → individual and collective (un)intentional strategies for, or against, change in relation to the strategically selective context – bringing together structural and agential factors.

1.5 Thesis layout

The book is divided into five parts, all related to one of the five guiding questions presented above. These sub questions have guided the design, data collection, analysis and writing, and are inspired by the 'three levels of education questions' proposed by Dale (2006: 190). The 'first level' of analysis focuses on the level of educational practice, and includes questions such as *who is taught, by whom, where and when, under what circumstances and with what results*? The 'second level' deals with education politics, and questions like *how, by whom and at what scale are these issues [the practice of teacher education] problematised, determined, coordinated, governed, administered and managed*? And finally, the more abstract 'third level' engages with 'the politics of education', and asks questions including *in whose interest are these practices and policies carried out; what is the scope of education and what are its relations to other sectors/scales*? The thesis does not aspire to cover all of these questions, but by engaging with various questions linked to all three levels, it does endeavour to open up '*extensions of the research imagination and of spaces of dialogue around other educations and education otherwise*' (Dale, 2006: 190).

In part I of the book, entitled 'THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS', chapter 1 explores the ontological and epistemological foundations of the study, and aims to develop a meta-theoretical interdisciplinary framework to understand the role and impact of Bolivian teacher education institutional mechanisms and actors in relation to the government's transformatory discourse and policies of decolonisation. Drawing from Hay's (2002a), Jessop's (2005) and Dale's (2010) interpretations of critical realism, this study is further inspired by the Cultural Political Economy (of Education) (Jessop, 2004b; Robertson, forthcoming) and Dale's 'Politics of Education' approach (2000; 2005). The thesis departs from the idea that Bolivia's current political project of transformation not only covers economic redistribution, yet also includes cultural and political aspects of recognition and representation, and as such draws from feminist (Fraser 1995; 2005) and critical pedagogical theories (such as Apple, 1982 and Giroux, 2003). The chapter continues to explore neo-Gramscian insights on processes of state transformation, and the role of both organic intellectuals and education within them and links them to theoretical debates on 'education for emancipation and liberation' that have been applied to this study, including Latin American theoretical debates on coloniality and critical pedagogy literature on the role of education in social transformation. This leads me to discuss the main debates in current literature on Social Justice Teacher Education (SJTE), and I derive some key criteria that are relevant to the Bolivian context, including an action-research methodology that supports critical thinking and reflexivity of (future) teachers. The chapter then turns to discuss the Strategic Relation Approach as developed by Hay (2002a), Jessop (2005) and others as the main inspiration for the methodological approach of this study, and aims to apply this to the field of education by also drawing from the multiscalar 'politics of education approach' (Dale 2000; 2005) and critical pedagogy. The result of this is illustrated in a conceptual scheme. Finally, the chapter highlights the specific aspects of this thesis' research design, its methodological tools, units of analysis, research methods and ethics. More specific literature discussions are introduced at the start of Parts III, IV and V on respectively institutional change, teacher identities and motivations, and teacher agency.

The second part of the book includes chapters 3 and 4 on 'BOLIVIA, TEACHERS AND CHANGE: SOCIO-POLITICAL AND EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT', and directly applies the meta-theoretical insights discussed in Part I. Chapter 3 explores the diverse

characteristics of Bolivian socio-political, geographical, ethnic and cultural historical and contemporary context. The chapter continues to define several dimensions of conflict in contemporary Bolivian society, which consequently impact – and are influenced by – the work of educators. Chapter 4 takes this discussion to the education arena, outlining the relevant historical developments in this field, with specific attention to the tensions over, and implementation challenges of, the intercultural and bilingual education reform of 1994. The chapter focuses on the specifics of the history of Bolivian teacher education from the early twentieth century up to the latest reform process in the 1990s. Part II thus provides the necessary historical and contemporary socio-political and educational background in order to further look into the issues of future teachers, their education and social transformation in Bolivia in the remaining chapters.

The third part of the book, 'STRUCTURAL FACTORS: INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNANCE', then engages with the current strategic selective context of the governance of teacher training institutes, its present mechanisms, actors and power-plays. Part III starts with an introduction on the main debates in the literature, which help to explain processes of institutional change and the main developments, strategies, opportunities and obstacles of teacher training governance. In doing so, it aims to react to the question of how and why teacher training is, or can be, changed according to the political ambitions of the new regime. Chapter 5 is dedicated to explain the current policy initiatives of the ASEP law for decolonising education, its implications for the teacher education sector, actors' various positions on and power struggles around the new policy and finally a set of challenges for future implementation of ASEP. Chapter 6 explores the politics of teacher education, portraying the governance in and around the Normales as a socio-political battlefield. The chapter first discusses the increasingly tense struggles for future teachers to get into these institutes. It continues to look at the way Bolivian actors perceive the various obstacles to institutional transformation, as well as potential opportunities for change, and several recent reform initiatives in the period between 2000 and 2010 are analysed. Consequently, the chapter zooms into the '*Practica Docente e Investigacion*' (PDI – teachers' practice and research) course and analyses the potentials and challenges of this course as a promising educational initiative for enhancing teachers' reflection, creative engagement and critical socio-political awareness geared towards social justice. The chapter ends by analysing if, and how far, the practices in Bolivia's Normales reflect the theoretical ideas of SJTE.

Addressing the institutional level is, however, only a part of this research approach, as the fourth part of the book 'AGENTIAL FACTORS: IDENTITIES AND MOTIVATIONS' aspires to understand and explain the agential factors underlying Bolivia's future teachers' agency for or against change. The brief literature discussion at the start of Part IV is needed in order to explain my findings on the motivations, identities and perceived roles of Bolivia's future generation of teachers, and the relation to the contemporary socio-political 'discursive context of change'. Chapters 7 and 8 aim to challenge the homogenising views that exist in the literature and society on Bolivia's teachers as poor and marginalised peasants and their efforts to become '*mestizos*', and reproduce homogenising educational tactics. Instead, in chapter 7 I demonstrate a more diverse picture of the internal identities of student teachers and their trainers, particularly highlighting a changing profile for Bolivia's future teacher force in terms of their increasing age and experience, as well as changing self identification processes. Chapter 8 continues to analyse the construction of Bolivian teachers' identities, by first outlining the various perceptions of

future teachers' alleged roles in urban and rural environments. Secondly, the chapter analyses the various views on 'the ideal Bolivian teacher' and finally, it discusses teachers' actual motivations to enter the teaching profession. In doing so, it challenges the assumption that Bolivian teachers are only driven by economic reasons, and it argues for the need to acknowledge and act upon a latent vocation and socio-politically engagement of Bolivia's future teachers.

Finally, in the fifth part entitled 'AGENCY, CHANGE AND CONTINUITY', I bring together the insights on the structural and agential factors in a discussion of the potentials, difficulties and limits to Bolivia's future teachers' agency as agents of social change. In the introduction to this last part, I highlight the main issues from the debates on teachers as agents of change. In chapter 9, I take the discussion to the obstacles and niches for Bolivian teachers' individual and collective strategies for or against the governmental envisaged project of transformation. The chapter finalises by questioning whether in a structural and agential context of continuity and change, Bolivia's teachers could be perceived as 'soldiers of liberation' or rather as guards of continuation. As a way of conclusion, the final chapter 10 returns to respond to the main research proposition and question of *how Bolivian pre-service teacher education institutes and actors develop strategies for or against socio-educational transformation that is envisaged by the new Plurinational constitutional regime?* The chapter uses the outcomes of the data analysis of this research to reflect upon and respond to the theoretical approaches and insights presented in chapter 2, and the introductions to the Book Parts III, IV and V, in a modest attempt to contribute to further theoretical understandings of teachers' engagement in processes of educational and socio-political transformation.